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ABSTRACT

Between 1991 and 1995, the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department funded a national evaluation of the implementation of the 5-14 Development Programme based on information gathered from both primary and secondary schools. This Interchange is concerned with secondary school perspective alone. Data were gathered from a nationwide questionnaire of headteachers and staff at approximately 120 secondary schools and interviews with headteachers and staff at 16 secondary schools. The data show that some schools wanted central direction and others wanted institutional autonomy in implementing the 5-14 guidelines. Headteachers identified facilitating factors as those internal to the school and considered visits by primary schools as the most successful liaison activity. However, problems were encountered in the transfer of information about students. Many secondary staff underused primary-school records. Three tables are included. (LMI)

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ED 390 173

THE SCOTTISH OFFICE
Education and Industry Department

No 37

Implementing 5-14 in Secondary Schools

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Implementing 5-14 in Secondary Schools

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Between 1991 and 1995, The Scottish Office Education and Industry Department funded a national evaluation of the implementation of the 5-14 Development Programme, based on information gathered from both primary and secondary schools. The ways in which the 5-14 Development Programme was implemented in the two sectors were inevitably different, mainly because of differences in the organisation of the curriculum and its delivery. Consequently there were variations in the extent to which the evaluation probed different aspects of the implementation. Because of this, the outcomes of the evaluation for primary and secondary schools have been separately reported.

This Interchange is concerned with the secondary school perspective alone. Interchange number 36 has primary school implementation as its focus. Both these reports are complemented by Interchange number 35, which outlines the design of the evaluation as a whole and summarises all its findings.

It is strongly recommended that senior promoted staff in both sectors read the two Interchanges on primary and secondary schools as well as number 35, the most general of the three.

Introduction

The data presented in this Interchange were gathered over three years in the course of interviews with headteachers and staff in 16 secondary schools, confirmed and supplemented by responses in a national questionnaire sample of approximately 120 secondary schools.

The management of the implementation

The general management strategy

The headteachers whom we interviewed had already had considerable involvement in previous major curriculum initiatives and were clearly determined to learn from their experiences:

> *What we have got to avoid is the mess we got into with TVEI and Standard Grade, where everybody was developing frantically all over the place. I firmly believe the learning experience of the existing kids within our school was suffering, because people were so busy developing. What is forgotten in all this ... is that the main function of the teacher is to teach. It is not to develop. The role of the headteacher in the 70s and 80s was to stimulate, but I think the role of the headteacher in the 90s is often to control.*

They felt the need not only to control the pace and scale of the developments, but to keep in focus its professional and educational benefits:

> *The real one is the real awareness which secondary school staff will have of what the curriculum in the primary school is like; and the progressive nature through the five key areas will be clearly articulated. So there will be an awareness of what children have actually experienced in terms of contact, skills, knowledge and understanding etc. I think the second one is that we will have a real opportunity to get some rigour, structure and progression into S1 and S2. That's a key factor.*

The overall strategy adopted by many was that of building incrementally on the strengths of their staff and the good practice which was already established:

> *Setting the pace and ensuring good quality work without crippling overburdened teachers but recognising that as professionals they want to explore how to implement the guidelines. ... that good teaching is already going on in S1 and S2 – I don't want to send out messages saying, 'Look folks, you've got it all wrong.' My approach is, 'You're doing a good job – let's see if we can build on that – see if there are gaps without saying we agree with guidelines – let's take a look at them.*

Despite the hopes expressed in the early stages that the implementation would prompt cross-curricular development activities, it became clear that the focal point of activities was within subject-specific departments working in relative isolation from each other. In this context, the input of a 5-14 co-ordinator was seen by the majority of headteachers (81%) as a more effective facilitating factor than that of a school development committee (29%).

One headteacher described the remit of such a co-ordinator as follows:

> *... built into the remit of the new assistant headteacher is a very explicit set of statements relating to the management of 5-14, acting as curriculum co-ordinator, nudger, facilitator, visionary. Nudgers are useful. It's a gentle process.*

What did headteachers see as the main management tasks?

During the last visit to schools in early 1994, headteachers were asked what had been the most important management tasks of the implementation:

- managing the pace, eg trying to *'move staff on'*, *'giving 5-14 a shove down the road'*, *'keeping people reasonably sanguine yet moving them on'*, walking a *'tightrope'* between making demands on staff and being sensitive to their understandable feelings of anxiety;
- protecting staff from excessive demands;
- working *'in step'* with primary schools;
- supporting 5-14 development groups;
- initiating cross-sector staff development;
- getting departmental development plans right;
- managing implementation in the context of the school development plan;
- maintaining the balance of development from S1-S6;
- working on *'how to achieve proper differentiation – do staff know how to do it?'*, *'how to cater for post level E'*, *'how to make more effective use of information from primary schools'* etc.

Headteachers considered that effective management enabled the skills of their staff to be developed and built upon.

What are the management strategies in your school for identifying and building on the existing staff skills and strengths?

School development planning

By 1993/94, the majority of headteachers (84%) were indicating that their school development plans also incorporated departmental plans for the implementation of the 5-14 Programme, and a similarly sized majority were rating this as a facilitating factor in the implementation, particularly with respect to pacing.

One headteacher described his procedures as follows:

> *I've just finished a review with every principal teacher looking at where we were at last year with regards to what the department is about to do, what they have done and looking ahead for 94/95 as to what might be realistic targets to take on board, not just in 5-14, but other areas within the school ....*

Principal teachers of mathematics and English had used their departmental plans to:

- develop a clear focus for 5-14;
- review the curriculum;
- set and meet targets;
- bid for development time;
- bid for primary school liaison time;
- revise record sheets;
- take on board forward planning (English);
- set up a matrix for each level (Maths).

There are many reasons why the secondary and the associated primary school development plans are liable to get out of step.

What is your strategy for co-ordinating school development planning between primary and secondary schools?

How were the schools' development plans co-ordinated?

In 1993/94, 48% of headteachers indicated that the development plans of their associated primaries were taken into account in the preparation of their own school plans but the co-ordination of secondary and associated primary school plans was clearly at an early stage in some school groups. Twelve of the fourteen schools in which we interviewed in 1994 were engaged in the processes of this through Area School Groups, cluster meetings, the exchange of planning documents and headteachers' meetings. Although the outcomes of these processes were mainly positive, for example one headteacher had experienced a great reduction in suspicion and hostility as a result of these meetings, some problems had been encountered, particularly when associated primary schools had identified priorities for development which were not only different from each other, but which could not easily be co-ordinated with those of the secondary school.

What were perceived as facilitating factors in the implementation?

Table 1: Factors contributing to progress in implementing 5-14
(Percentage of headteachers responding to 1993/94 questionnaire, n = 79)

Implementing 5-14 in relative independence from Region	23
Strong regional guidance/co-ordination	27
Work of 5-14 school committee	29
Regional INSET for staff development	49
Staff development by school	66
Incorporating 5-14 into the school development plan	80
Committed, enthusiastic staff	80
Work of 5-14 school co-ordinator	81
Building good relationships with associated primary schools	89

In the majority of schools, the facilitating factors identified were internal to the school.

What are the key facilitating factors in your school?

How was the role of the local authorities perceived?

Although headteachers had a wide range of views on whether they had found their Regions helpful or not, their responses perhaps reflected their perceptions of the extent to which they felt the locus of control of the developments to be outside or inside the school, rather than reflecting any objective assessment of the efficiency of the Authority staff.

Some schools treated the 5-14 Programme as a centrally-initiated requirement and relied on help and direction from outside.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of this strategy?

Some schools treated the programme as an initiative over which they had a high degree of control and which was based on and could be developed through the skills and strengths of their staff.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of this strategy?

How could you incorporate the best of both the above into your implementation strategy?

A centrally-directed development?

In some schools, a clear view was expressed that unless and until the Region gave clear directions, targets and timetables, little could be expected in the way of developments.

For example, one school co-ordinator, an assistant headteacher, indicated that his insecurities would be reduced if he was in possession of a map which detailed exactly the route forward:

> *My real priority, what would really help me, is more guidance from the Region. Because until I know where I'm supposed to be going, and I'm given some help to get me through this morass of paper, all the documents I'm supposed to be familiar with, and to see ways in which I can help staff to implement it, until I get some guidance on where I should be going, it's a difficult problem.*

He considered that the Regional staff needed to ensure that the schools set off in the right direction and were kept moving through the application of tighter management at Area level, with targets being set and schools being held accountable for meeting them.

Clearly, those schools in which the developments were dependent on support, direction, sticks and carrots provided by Authority staff would experience any shortfall in these as adversely affecting their progress.

A school-centred development?

In other schools, management staff held the contrasting view to that above, perceiving that the key to effective implementation lay almost wholly within the school, and that although some expertise from outside in the form of practical classroom models of successful innovations would be helpful, the essential elements for successful implementation were the professional skills and commitment of their own staff.

For example, one headteacher had promoted the positive benefits which the programme would bring not only to pupils and parents.

> *... the better involvement of young people in the learning process and hopefully better understanding on the part of the parents as a result of the kind of feedback and all the information (which will be provided)...*

but also for the school staff –

> *They should get greater professional satisfaction, there ought to be a better learning experience for the young people and that will manifest itself. I think that in the whole environment in which they operate, you'll notice a major change in terms of classroom experience, of relationships.*

Many secondary staff welcomed the initiative as an opportunity to undertake developments they had long felt to be desirable.

He considered that many of the problems associated with the required changes were related to the professional confidence of the staff and the insecurity which was generated when new methods were adopted, for example, in the area of differentiation:

> *It's attitudes; it's really attitudinal. I think that there is almost a feeling among staff that they don't have the skills, but in actual fact, once you set people along the route to differentiation, it's amazing what skills they actually do have; but there is real apprehension.*

What do the staff in your school see as the key educational benefits of the 5-14 Programme?

However this headteacher had communicated to his staff two beliefs – that this was an educationally sound initiative, and that as professionals they would be both concerned and capable of making an appropriate response without waiting for external directives and without significant outside help. He had ensured that the valuable resource of additional time for the development work had been secured for the staff of the English and mathematics departments.

The effects of this approach had been to evoke the professionalism of the teachers who responded to the Programme, not with a grudging compliance to an external directive, but by a considered development and extension of their best practice which they owned and from which they clearly derived great professional satisfaction:

> *The last word on 5-14? This is not going to be my epitaph! At least I don't think so! It's probably been one of the areas that has stimulated me most since I started teaching, I would say, more than Standard Grade, more than modules and fifth year and the Higher. It has been one of the most satisfying areas of work that I have been involved in, I would say, by far.*
> *(Senior teacher)*

A case study of the management of the implementation in a secondary school department has been produced – see *The Professional Journey* in the list of publications at the end of this Interchange.

Early views on primary/secondary links

What were the aspirations for the developments?

At the beginning of our study in early Spring 1992, secondary headteachers spoke positively and optimistically about their hopes for improved links between primary and secondary schools. In particular they hoped that, as a result of the implementation of 5-14, it would be easier to provide a continuum of learning experiences for pupils from primary school to secondary school, with increasing standardisation, in curricular terms, between associated primary schools.

The improvement most anticipated by secondary school teachers was the receipt of records which would give detailed information on the attainment levels of individual pupils.

What sort of relationships existed prior to 5-14?

Prior to the introduction of the 5-14 Programme, many schools had already formed what they regarded as *'close'* links through *'traditional'* liaison procedures, for example, guidance or learning support teachers visiting primary schools and P7 pupils visiting the secondary school during the summer term. A very small proportion of schools had developed their relationships further. For example, one school reported how it had already established liaison through cluster meetings, and although the nature of the meetings had been mainly social, they had a well-established group in place when the secondary headteacher introduced a starter paper to encourage members to look at the key issues of 5-14 in a more formal way.

The majority of headteachers welcomed the opportunities for primary school liaison.

What are the best ways to keep up the impetus on these initiatives?

Developing the links

What activities did the programme prompt?

By early in 1993, every headteacher we interviewed spoke positively, and most spoke enthusiastically, about progress in their relationships with their associated primary schools; relationships were *'excellent'*, there was *'co-operation'*, *'a pulling together'*, *'a frank exchange of views'*, and *'continuing development'*.

These activities had mathematics and English as their focus and included cluster groups, liaison groups comprising different compositions of teachers and management, primary pupils visiting secondary schools for computer work, PE, language facilities etc, and area group meetings and working parties.

Developing sensitivities

Primary and secondary sectors are necessarily different, but must be seen as equal with respect to the validity of their aims, methods and strategies.

What are the key difficulties generated by lack of sensitivity as staff liaise and interact across the two sectors? How can these difficulties be reduced or avoided?

Emerging from the interviews was evidence of an awareness on the part of secondary school staff of the need to be *'sensitive'* in dealings with their primary school colleagues, for example, one was concerned about developing *'ahead'* of primary schools:

> *The secondary has also to be very sympathetic to the primary schools because we can develop across a whole spectrum of areas. It's more difficult for them, you are targeting the same individual teacher all the time ... (Headteacher)*

Another headteacher referred to the recognition that schools had different priorities. They saw a need to ensure that what the secondary staff *'brought up for discussion didn't pre-empt what someone else wanted to talk about'*. He felt that one or two of the primary school headteachers had felt initially threatened by this, but were now *'ready to protest'* when things did not go as they felt they should.

It appeared that there had been genuine attempts by secondary staff to smooth over uneven cross-sector seams, and, in particular, to show that they were not the dominant partner in the relationship.

What problems had been encountered?

The problems which had been encountered appeared to be concerned with the mechanisms rather than more sensitive professional issues, for example, obtaining supply cover for teachers to attend meetings, lack of time to meet and visit primary schools, and the number of associated primary schools. Secondary schools with more than ten associated primary schools reported particular problems associated with manageability and co-ordination of activities.

What did secondary school staff feel was most successful?

Questionnaire data gathered in the winter term of 1993/94 revealed that the previously well-established pre 5-14 mechanisms for liaison and communication were still the most favoured in terms of success. For example, primary school pupils visiting the secondary school was considered to be the most successful liaison activity by principal teachers of both mathematics and English (see Table 2).

Table 2: Success of liaison activities
(Percentage of principal teachers responding to 1993/94 questionnaire, Mathematics n = 71, English (in brackets) n = 77)*

Statement	*Very or mostly successful*	*Not involved*
Link work which pupils begin in primary school and finish in secondary school	24 (38)	68 (56)
Discussion with primary teachers when visiting primary schools	61 (66)	31 (22)
Discussion with learning support teachers who have visited primary schools	47 (58)	39 (29)
Discussion at 5-14 cluster or area group meetings	57 (64)	30 (26)
Co-operatives or team teaching with primary teachers	20 (25)	76 (70)
Use of secondary school material in primary schools	30 (13)	63 (70)
Pupils bringing examples of primary school work into secondary school	14 (50)	79 (39)
Primary pupils visiting secondary schools	79 (86)	10 (9)
Primary teachers 'shadowing' secondary teachers	18 (12)	72 (79)
Joint in-service sessions with primary schools	42 (58)	48 (35)
Adoption of primary school teaching methods in secondary school	11 (20)	78 (70)

*Principal teachers who gave no response are not included in the table.

The secondary school staff reported low involvement in innovative liaison activities.

What are the key needs of pupils which are not being met by the already established methods of liaison?

Principal teachers of both mathematics and English reported a low degree of involvement in a range of innovative activities such as co-operative or team teaching with primary school teachers, primary school teachers shadowing secondary school teachers and possible adoption of primary school teaching methods. Nevertheless, they reported on the positive experiences of a number of specifically focussed activities, for example, mathematics teachers described working with primary colleagues on curricular materials, whilst English teachers referred to activities such as cross-marking between primary and secondary schools, in order to confirm ideas on levels.

Use of primary school records: progression and continuity

Where were they starting from?

At the beginning of the evaluation, in early 1992, headteachers' perceptions of the main uses of primary records, to identify pupils with learning difficulties and to establish mixed ability classes, did not suggest that they were used extensively as an aid to early differentiation in S1.

In our interviews, the majority of principal teachers in mathematics and English said that although they did not operate a *'fresh start'* policy, most of their staff preferred to use their own judgements about pupils. In mathematics, the main mechanisms for continuity were attainment tests or a commonly used scheme. The *'fresh start'* approach was more widely reported from English departments (more than three quarters of those interviewed), with assessment in S1 described as 'informal'.

Almost half of mathematics and the majority of English teachers interviewed reported that they did not refer to primary records at all and that they liked a *'fresh start'* policy. Nevertheless, all groups of respondents thought that the 5-14 guidelines would aid curricular continuity between primary and secondary schools and would benefit both teachers and pupils.

It seems that many secondary teachers still believe in a 'fresh start' policy for S1 pupils.

What are the consequences for progression and continuity of failing to use evidence of prior attainment to take pupils on from where they are?

How did things develop?

Table 3 shows the responses of teachers to some of our questionnaire items about the use of primary school records some two years later in 1993/94.

The use of primary records clearly varied, with 44% of the English teachers and over 39% of the mathematics teachers indicating that they contained little that was of use to them. About half of both sets of teachers indicated that they liked a *'fresh start'* policy with pupils at the beginning of S1 and preferred to use their own judgements about the pupils. Only 17% of the English teachers used the records to plan appropriate work; the figure for mathematics teachers was considerably higher at 52%.

Table 3: Use of primary school reports
(Percentage of English and mathematics teachers responding to 1993/94 questionnaire)*

	English (n = 75)		*Mathematics (n = 75)*	
	Agree/ agree strongly	*Disagree/ disagree strongly*	*Agree/ agree strongly*	*Disagree/ disagree strongly*
Contain little of use	44	41	39	53
Difficult to find time to see all	68	23	61	32
Prefer to form own judgements	57	35	49	45
Regularly use the information	24	64	33	63
Like a 'fresh start' policy	47	43	45	49
Use to plan appropriate work	17	72	52	40
Pupils are assessed formally at start of S1	35	57	23	72

*Teachers who gave no response are not included in the table.

What were the concerns of the secondary staff?

Many of the concerns expressed about the use of primary school records, and by implication about continuity and progression, reflected teachers' personal attitudes, perceptions and orientations associated with a variety of related issues, such as differentiation, particularly at the beginning of S1, the availability of resources and views on what they believed to be educationally desirable from the pupil's perspective. For example, one principal teacher said:

> *The general attitude is that it's good for pupils to have a fresh start because they're entering a new environment and fixed timetable. Pupils like this ... staff like to make up their own minds about pupils, rather than be told ... (Mathematics principal teacher)*

Many secondary school staff under-use primary school records.

Additionally, it seemed that many of the difficulties which had to be overcome concerning the use of primary school records and, by implication, the planning for progression and continuity, were associated with the transfer of information about pupils and the extent to which this information was considered useful and trustworthy. The *content* of primary school reports, the *consistency* of these reports across associated primary schools, and lack of agreement between sectors on the *comparability of standards* when a pupil's level of performance was indicated, were all pin-pointed as areas requiring further development. Teachers also found it difficult to find time to read and be responsive to the records of individuals.

What steps can be taken to help primary and secondary teachers come to a better consensus about standards of attainment?

What innovations were taking place?

Continuity for the individual pupil depends on a match of the demand of the new work to the previous attainments of that child. To achieve this, information at an individual level has to be communicated and used. Our data indicated that the records passed from primary to secondary staff were still an under-developed and under-used resource.

Nevertheless, there were indications that, in some schools, novel assessment, recording and reporting systems were being developed, incorporating procedures for pupil involvement, including self-assessment, and the sharing of criteria for progression.

Increasingly, agreements were being made with cross-sector colleagues on what information should be passed from the primary to the secondary schools. For example: folios of pupils' best work, accompanied by the teacher's assessment of level of achievement reached (A-E); the pupils' own personal records of work undertaken (eg of personal reading); the pupils' national test results; and the teacher's summary accounts of the pupils' strengths and weaknesses in key areas. Teachers in some associated school groups were planning to use 'contracts' which comprise a list of 'can do' statements. The pupils tick the statements which apply to the things they feel they can do. Secondary school staff receive a copy of the contracts and go over it on a one-to-one basis with the pupils, using their folios of best work as illustration.

Where had they got to?

Although the procedures for primary/secondary liaison were still in the early stages of their development in many schools, it was clear that considerable ground had been covered since the introduction of the programme, and commitment was high. In our final questionnaire, 81% of secondary headteachers agreed/agreed strongly with the statement,

> *During the last year our relationship with all our associated primary schools has developed in a positive way as a result of 5-14.*

Clearly a great deal of ground has still to be covered before the aspirations for enhanced educational experiences at individual pupil level are achieved. Nevertheless, the innovative nature of the developments indicate that there are interesting times ahead and considerable grounds for optimism.

The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of The Scottish Office Education and Industry Department who funded the study.

Related research reports

Evaluation of the implementation of 5-14: an overview

This report will be available from The Scottish Council for Research in Education, 15 St John Street, Edinburgh EH8 8JR.

Implementing the 5-14 development programme in primary schools

This report will be available from The Scottish Council for Research in Education (address above).

Implementing the 5-14 development programme in secondary schools

The data gathered over the four years of the evaluation of the implementation in secondary schools are collated in the following reports:

Impact on classroom practice in secondary schools	ISBN 1-872054-13-7
Management of the implementation in secondary schools	ISBN 1-872054-14-5
Assessment and national testing in secondary schools	ISBN 1-872054-15-3
Primary/secondary liaison: secondary schools' perspectives	ISBN 1-872054-16-1
The professional journey: A case study of implementation in a secondary school department	ISBN 1-872054-17-X

Copies of these reports can be obtained from the Department of Educational Research, Northern College, Hilton Place, Aberdeen AB9 1FA. Price £5 each. For further information, consult the Northern College World Wide Web server at http://www.norcol.ac.uk

5-14 and national testing

5-14 and the least and most able pupils (£6.00 incl p & p)
National testing 1991-92 (£4.00 incl p & p)

Available from Dr George Thomson, Department of Education, University of Edinburgh, 10 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh EH8 9JT.

5-14 and reporting

Reporting 5-14

This report will be available from Quality in Education Centre, University of Strathclyde, Jordanhill Campus, Southbrae Drive, Glasgow G13 1PP.

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